Monthly eMagazine of Vedanta Ashram & Mission

Vedanta Sandesh

Year 29 Apr 2025 Issue 10

Cover Page

The cover page of our Apr 2025 issue of Vedanta Sandesh is a unique bird of Eastern Himalayas, which has a 'least concern' status from conservation point of view. It is the Long-tailed Broadbill (Psarisomus dalhousiae).

Long-tailed Broadbills have a bright yellow throat and face, a helmet-like black cap with a sleek blue patch on the crown. The feathers along the back, belly and top of the wings are bright green and have a long blue tail. They have strong, broad bill that is yellowish green in color. These are social birds usually seen foraging about in small flocks. Despite their loud high-pitched calls, they are relatively shy birds that usually hide among the foliage of trees. They are mostly insectivorous but occasionally feed on berries too.

When spotted these awesome birds are a treat to the eyes of the beholder who just sings the glories of its equally awesome creator.

Om Namah Shivaya

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Vedanta Sandesh

Apr 2025

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Editor

Swamini Samatananda Saraswati

Vedanta Sandesh

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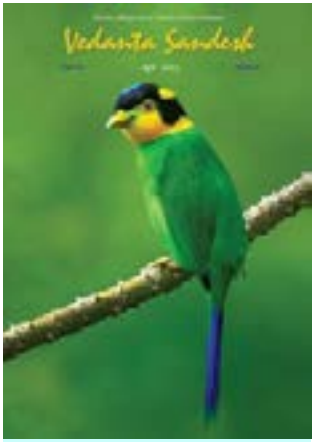

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अविज्ञाते परे तत्त्वे
शास्त्राधीतिस्तु निष्फला।
विज्ञातेऽपि परे तत्त्वे
शास्त्राधीतिस्तु निष्फला।।

Without knowing the supreme Reality, the study of the Sastras is futile. Having known the supreme Reality, the study of the Sastras is equally futile.

Vivekachoodamani - 61

Message from Poojya Guruji

Two Nishtha's

Have you ever been in a fix like Arjuna, whether you should go for an action oriented life and try to make our lives and also the world a better place or first try to deeply understand the truth of everything around including ourself? Well, Bhagwad Gita and in fact the whole Vedas have a unique & practical suggestion for us in the form of Two Nishtha principle. Let us explore and try to understand this proposition.

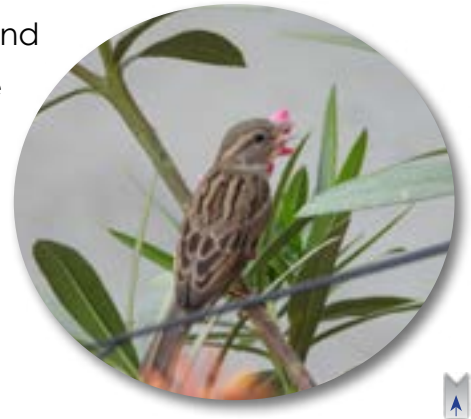
Means & End

Before we go into the 'right means' we need to be first aware of the so called 'end'. True freedom is by appreciating the truth of ourselves and the world around, and then go about living our lives. Ultimately it is the Self-Knowledge which matters most. Not knowing the truth we imagine ourself to be limited, incomplete and insecure, and then all our endeavors are directed to basically bring about our security and fulfillment and also the well-being of our near & dear ones. The realization that deep-down we are neither incomplete nor insecure changes the entire paradigm. Thus the paramount importance & priority of Self-Knowledge.

Not knowing the real truth we all live with deep-rooted presumption of our own insecurities and incompleteness. Everything else is built upon that presumption. If the very foundation is flimsy & false then we literally waste our entire life and the whole subsequent structure most often does not sustain, and may even fall like a pack of cards.

Self-Knowledge is door to Moksha

If Self-knowledge is the door to Moksha, true freedom & lasting fulfillment, then obviously our life needs to be geared for this goal. Whatever is required for 'this' needs to become our goal & priority. This includes our thoughtful, and highly intelligent mind, the right kind of environment and people around. The



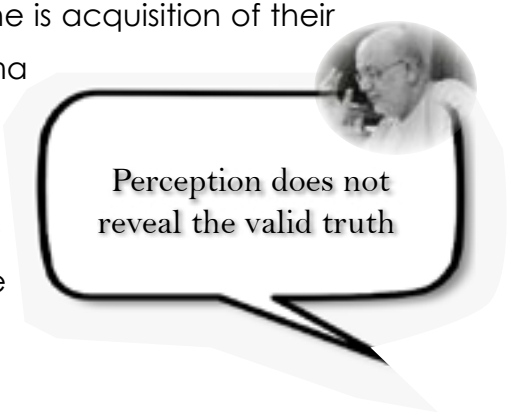
most important is our awakened & compassionate Guru, from whom we come to know the entire Art & Science of Self-Knowledge. Such a person has no other goal & agenda. Obviously they need to be very healthy and capable of a simple contemplative life. If at all we already have such a mind-set, such goal and Guru, then we are ready to take-off and be totally free to take on life as it comes. However, most of the time this is not so.

Preparations for Gyana

Our mind is highly influenced by our surround & world, so as we grow up most often the perceptions and the subsequent aspirations of the common people of the

world get deeply ingested & imbibed in us. The fundamental conclusions of ourselves and our life is based on perceptual realities and if that is taken on face-value then we land up with baseless & untrue conclusions of life, and then the seeking's of life are endless because we basically pursue mirages. So our starting point is never a clean, inquisitive & a thoughtful mind, but rather a highly conditioned, brain-washed and extrovert mind. Such people have no questions for self-knowledge nor even to know the truth of life. They think that they know it all, and all what needs to be done is acquisition of their aspired things. So Karma is the way to go.

The first realization which needs to come is to deeply see



that extraneous configurations never satiate. Inspite of everything we continue to seek, we remain insecure the basic disease continues to linger. It is only when we realize that we do not know the real truth that there is humility and motivation to re-visit our perception. The real beginning is with the manifestation of realization of our ignorance and then the inquisitiveness to know the truth can exist.

Cleansing the Mind

In the process of our quests outside, we gather lot of deep likes & dislikes. These likes & dislikes are terrible forces. Thereafter we are never free to do or not to do, but are forced to do what our conditioning propel us to do. Many things may be fine but overall the

capacity to be free while pursuing anything is the mark of a truly intelligent person. Freedom implies the capacity to do or not to do, or do it differently. This is the beginning of a life of freedom and pursuit of knowledge. Freedom is not from action but in action. The agendas however changes. Initially while action our agenda was acquisition of things outside, sensual gratifications etc, but for a person who realizes that extraneous things are never too much of an issue then priority becomes invocation of creativity, originality and better wisdom. With this starts the first Nishtha as propounded by Bhagwan in Bhagwad Gita and this was initially propounded in the Upanishad portion of Vedas. Let us go into these Nishtha's.

Two Nishtha's

1. Be a Yogi: Bhagwan says that if your mind is open, thoughtful, creative then you need to aspire for a very intelligent mind. Don't leave the work field but work rather for this goal. He calls it a mind of a Yogi. Such a person and his/her mind is tested in the very field of action and all its challenges. Equanimity in all the situations is the touch word. Such a mind is called a pure mind, a sattvic mind, a clean mind etc. The way forward in your work field or in your life-knowledge is with this kind of mind alone. They acquire and polish such a mind even when they keep on attaining heights outside or maybe while facing problems. Every situation is a blessing to create & polish a Yogic Mind.

2. Be a Contemplative Sanyasi:

Having acquired a Yogic Mind, one should free oneself from all external agendas & goals and dedicate oneself to re-visit his/her notions of Self and the world which continue to let us remain limited beings. This is second Nishtha - called Sankhya. The proposition of wise & enlightened people is that deep-down we are not limited beings, but the very essence of life - infinite, imperishable and non-dual. So till be appreciate this directly & intimately this is the way to go. It is a very profound goal and has to be pursued with all the passion & intensity at our command.

World of a Yogi and a Sanyasi

Both these Nishtha's are so unique that they have to be handled one at a time. First

accomplish the first by being a Yogi and then we need to keep everything aside, and pursue the second goal with our entire heart & soul. Nishtha word basically means a sense of profound dedication and application of our self-effort. In the first we use the external goals and challenges to retain our equanimity etc, and in the second we completely turn within and explore. So they cannot be followed together. Like some short session of Self-knowledge in the morning and then goals of the world outside rest of the day. This way we shall never attain the best in any field. So Bhagwan and even Upanishads tell us to tread slowly and handle these one at a time. All those who keep their legs in two boats going in different directions fall flat attaining neither. That's the lesson of Two Nishtha's.

DRIG DRISHYA VIVEKA

Swamini Samatananda

Shloka - 29

स्तब्धीभावो रसास्वादात्
तृतीयं पूर्ववन्मतः।
एतैः समाधिभिः षड्भिः
नयेत्कालं निरन्तरम्॥

Total Stillness due to the experience of Bliss is Antar nirvikalpa smadhi. This is the third type as described before. In the practise of these Six Meditations one should engage himself at all times.

DRIG DRISHYA VIVEKA

Sangati:

Having suggested the three types of Internal Samadhis the Acharya compassionately reveals the three types of External Samadhis which are based on the same pattern of Internal Samadhis. The external samadhis being Bahya drishyanuviddh savikalpa samadhi, Bahya shabdanuviddh savikalpa samadhi and herein the following verse the

Acharya says, that just as revealed in earlier meditational practice an intense practice of these two samadhis also culminates in Bahya nirvikalpa samadhi and that every sincere aspirant must practise this constantly.

Stabdhee bhaavah .....

By practising the two types of Antar and Baahya samadhis very intensely, the meditater negates all duality of names and forms, time and space. In fact, the duality of 'Internal and External' is also negated. The meditater awakens in a non-dual, limitless and eternal pure state of existence, which is ever-existent and pure consciousness. Pure consciousness is also not separate from it. The Revered Acharya

Samadhi is like home-coming

says a spiritual aspirant must spend his time in the practise of these samadhis in its sequence.

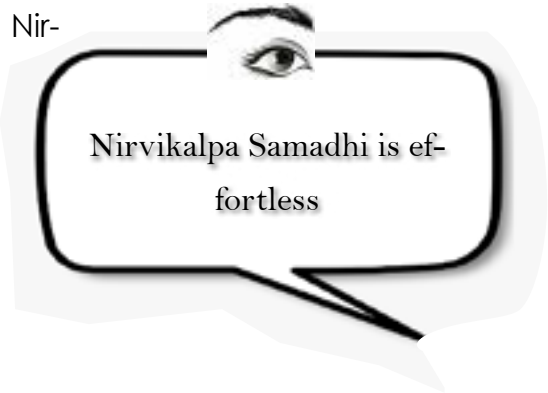
In this kind of continuous practise our limited identity gets totally absorbed in our own fundamental nature of satchidananda swaroopah and this invokes a very unique blissful state because it is like home-coming. Awakening in the state of pure existence, pure consciousness and bliss. Even though the world outside continues to exist in all its hustle and bustle yet this person glides in a state of non duality where the internal and external all become one. He becomes one with creation, He becomes one within. This is not a state of blissfulness because of something. He himself is bliss. There are no

desires and no individual jiva who desires. Kaam and Kaami both are dissolved as imaginary beings who never had any real existence. This state of Samadhi has a very subtle existence of a bhokta who is enjoying this blissful state. This is called as 'rasaswaadah' in our scriptures.

As long as one continues to practice this Samadhi very intensely and continuously then even this very subtle exitence of an enjoyer is negated and this dosha of rasaswaadah is also dissolved and one

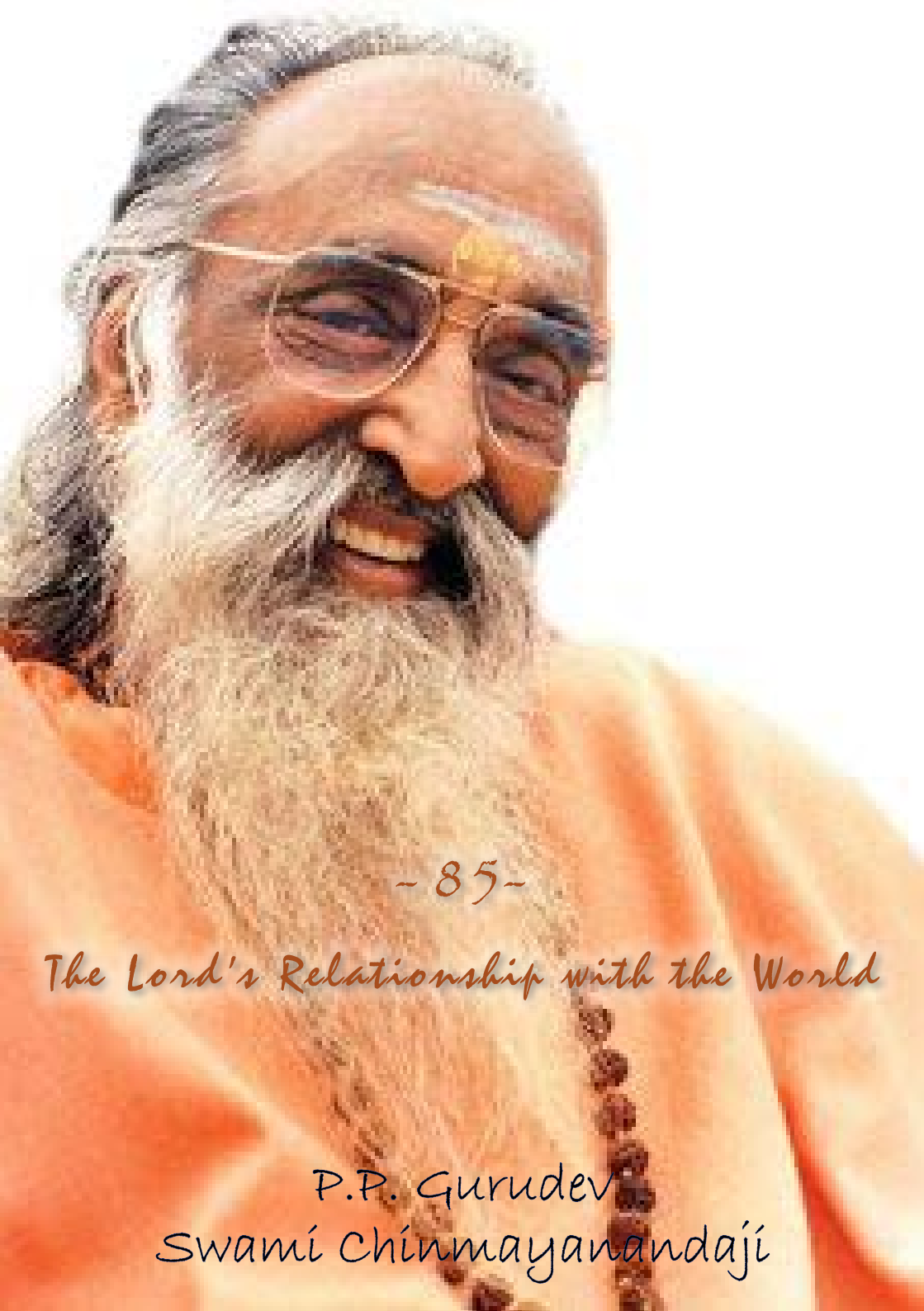
awakens into a state of total stillness which the Acharya calls as 'Stabdhibhaavah'. There is no existence of a bhokta or bhojya and any act of enjoyment. There is only a state of pure existence which is totally effortless. This effortless state of Samadhi is Nirvikalpa Samadhi.

This is almost like Deep sleep state - a nirvikalpa awastha where there is no subject object division. But there is a difference here and that difference is that one glides into Nirvikalpa Samadhi by awakening into the true nature of the Self as Sachidananda whereas we glide into deep sleep state out of fatigue. Its still a state of ignorance and we wake up ignorant. Whereas in Nirvikalpa Samadhi we glide into it as a prasad of enlightenment and wake up enlight-



ened. This Nirvikalpa samadhi is a state of absorption where the awareness of Aham Brahmasmi lies deep within in its most subtle form.

In this manner the Revered Acharya reaffirms that every Vedantic student must practice all these six states of Samadhis.



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The Lord's Relationship with the World

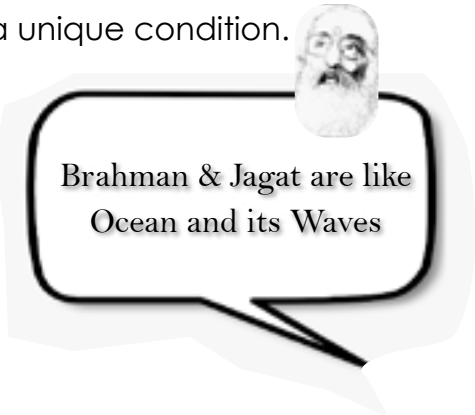
P.P. Gurudev
Swami Chinmayanandaji

The Art of Man Making

In the previous talks on this chapter, we learnt that the Lord, as Consciousness in every living creature, is the vital Life in each, and since Consciousness is one everywhere, in every creature, It is the One Sole Reality. It is the substratum at once for the individual and for the whole universe.

The Art of Man Making

What is the relationship between the immortal Lord of the Universe and the mortal beings in the universe? What is the relationship between the ocean and its waves? We cannot say that the ocean has become the waves; nor can we say that the waves have nothing to do with the ocean. A wave is not the ocean, yet, all waves put together represent at least the total surface of the ocean. The wave is not the ocean, but the wave has the ocean, as it is the very essence in the wave. The waves are related to the ocean; but the ocean in itself has no relationship as such with the waves. This is a unique condition.



Similarly, from the Supreme Consciousness arises the entire uni-

verse. The universe plays in the Infinite Consciousness. Apart from this mighty Reality, the universe can have no existence at all. Yet, Consciousness is not ever related to, or conditioned by, the universe.

This is too unique a relationship for expression in words, except by the statement of paradox. The Lord's relationless relationship with the world of things and beings is too subtle an aspect for language to explain. Yet Krishna has successfully attempted here to communicate it to Arjuna.

The Geeta Acharya says that whatever modes there are, pertaining to sattwa, rajas or tamas,

Vedanta Sandesh

From imaginary 'me' to the real 'me'

know them all to proceed from Me alone; yet I am not in them-they are in Me. We all know that the mind, during a single day, passes through different modes: sometimes peaceful (sattwic), sometimes restless (rajasic) and at other times dull (tamasic). In these three modes of the mind, good, bad and indifferent desires come to play in us, and they force us to express ourselves as noble and intelligent (sattwic), or dynamic and active (rajasic) or dull and stupid (tamasic) people. Now Krishna asserts that in all these three modes of the mind, whatever thoughts and actions spring from creatures, they all are to be known as proceeding "from Me alone" There is no other source from which crea-

tures and their actions can spring.

Yet, the Lord's relationless relationship with the entire flux of happenings is openly indicated, "I am not in them they are in Me".

Such a relationless relationship is possible only in a super-imposition projected by a mind under illusion. If we take an example it will be quite clear: the ghost in the post. The ghost vision arises from the post and disappears into the post. Yet, from the standpoint of the post, the ghost was never born! The ghost is seen only by the mind under illu-

sion. When the mind discovers the post, the ghost vision ends.

Similarly, the world of plurality is superimposed upon the Supreme by our minds. When the mind ends in meditation, the Self alone remains. The delusion ends and the delusion-created world of desires and passions lifts itself and disappears as the mist at the rise of the sun.

If this is the real nature of the universe, why does man generally fail to recognise it? Krishna points out, Deluded by these three gunas and their expressions, this world does not know Me, who am beyond them and immutable. Under the influence of these three modes of the human mind, the behavior of man is fickle and un-

certain. We all get extremely identified with our minds and so behave as good, bad or indifferent, according to the ruling mood of the moment. In the identification with the mind, the egocentric individuality is born, and this ego thereafter acts according to the prevailing mood of the mind.

In this continuous preoccupation with the passions and desires within us, we live a completely extrovert life of striving, ever seeking fulfilments of our desires in the world of objects. Thus, we have no peace within to feel the Higher "Presence" in the depths of our hearts.

The pure Infinite Consciousness is the ever present Illuminator of all our thoughts and feelings, our

passions and perceptions. The Illuminator is always different from the illumined. We are only conscious of things; we do not experience the pure objectless Consciousness.

In the hushed moments of utter meditation, the functions of the senses, mind and intellect halt, and at such rare intervals of peace and quiet within, the meditator awakes to the blissful state of pure Awareness and realises "Me, the Immutable, who am beyond them".

Jivanmukta

Wandering In Himalayas

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Lake Manasa

Tranquil Beauty

Excerpts from the Travel Memoirs of
Param Poojya
Swami Tapovanji Maharaj

JIVANMUKTA

The distance to Lake Manasa, stretching to the southeast of Kailas, is only 15 miles. On the first day of our march, we went across the vast valley at the foot of Mt. Kailas, crossing several streams that empty into Lake Rakshasthal, and reached a small village called Varka. On the next morning, we moved eastward along the shore of Rakshasthal and in three or four hours arrived at the lamasery called Chiyu

on the northwest side of Lake Manasa. It is one of the eight lamaseries on the lake, situated between Manasa and Rakshasthal. We spent some time in the company of the Chief Lama there. From the lamasery we could get a full view of the holy lake, Manasarovar. With my limited powers of expression, how can I hope to impress upon the readers the beauty and the holiness of the lake, which has been described so splendidly by the ancients in Buddhist and Hindu scriptures, and which continues to attract enlightened visitors from all parts of the world year after year?

It is the most beautiful sight among the very beautiful sights of the earth. The lake lies 16,000 feet above sea level. It is surrounded by bleak, naked,

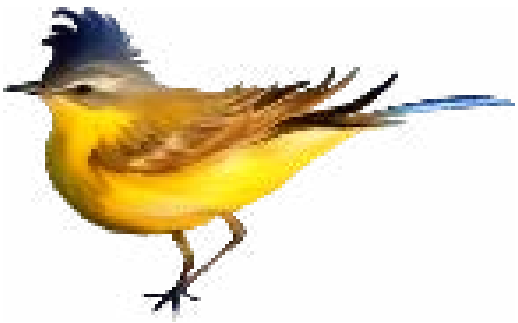
black granite mountains whose peaks are covered with snow. When winds blow, huge waves roll over the surface of the lake as in the ocean; but when the winds die down, the lake's deep-blue water lies perfectly calm. This time I saw a large number of small swans, resembling Indian ducks, gracefully swimming on the surface of the lake.

After resting we descended to the lake for our bath. We washed ourselves slowly in the crystal-clear water near the source of the Sutlej, called Gangachoo. Compared with the Ganga water at Gangotri, the Mandakini water at Kedar, and the Alakananda water at Badri, the water of Manasa is warm. That is because the water in the lake stands still and remains exposed to sunlight. It is quite possible to remain in the water for two or three minutes

and even dive into its depths. At Gangotri and other places it is severe penance to remain in the water even for ten or fifteen seconds.

After our bath, we sat on the shore of the lake for a long time, repeating the holy names of the Lord and worshipping Him. At two o'clock we left Chiyu and climbed back to the place where we had left the merchants. They had just prepared their meal, and we shared it with them. When we had rested, they suggested that it would be safer to leave early to avoid the ravages of highwaymen and move to an encampment of shepherds a few miles away. Acting on their suggestion, we set out at three o'clock and trekked slowly

the three or four miles along the lake's western shore. We set up our tents for the night on a spacious spot close to the beautiful lake.



नमामि भक्तवत्सलं
RAM NAVMI
GREETINGS

STORY

Section

The legend of Kakbhushundi

Once, Kakabhushundi refused to offer his respects to his guru while he was engaged in prayer to Shiva in a temple. Angered, Shiva cursed his ungrateful devotee to take the form of a snake and live a thousand lives as a lesser creature. After his guru prayed to the deity to moderate the curse, Shiva stated that after his thousand

cursed births, Kakabhushundi would become a devotee of Rama. The deity also warned him never to displease a preceptor ever again. Accordingly, following the cursed births, Kakabhushundi was born as a Brahmin, and grew to become a great follower of Rama and a sage. While listening to the discourse to a sage named Lomasha on the merits of nirguna worship over that of saguna worship of Brahman, he refused to accept these views. In his fury, Lomasha cursed him to become a crow.

The sage told Garuda that every Treta Yuga, he goes to Ayodhya and stays in the

city for five years, watching the child Rama as a crow. Once, Rama tried to catch him with all the antics of an excited child. A moment of doubt regarding Rama's divinity occurred in the sage's mind. When Kakabhushundi soared towards the sky, he realised that the deity's fingers were always mere fingerbreadths away from him, even when he flew all the way to Brahmaloka. When he opened his eyes, he found himself back in Ayodhya amid the laughing child. He witnessed a cosmic vision in Rama's mouth, observing millions of suns and moons within, and a vision of the sage himself in Ayodhya within each celestial object. He resided within each of these realms for centuries and returned from Rama's

mouth to find himself returning to the same moment in time as he had left. Bewildered, he begged for Rama's salvation and was promptly blessed with the same. He chose to forever remain in the form of a crow as he had been blessed by his favoured deity in that form.

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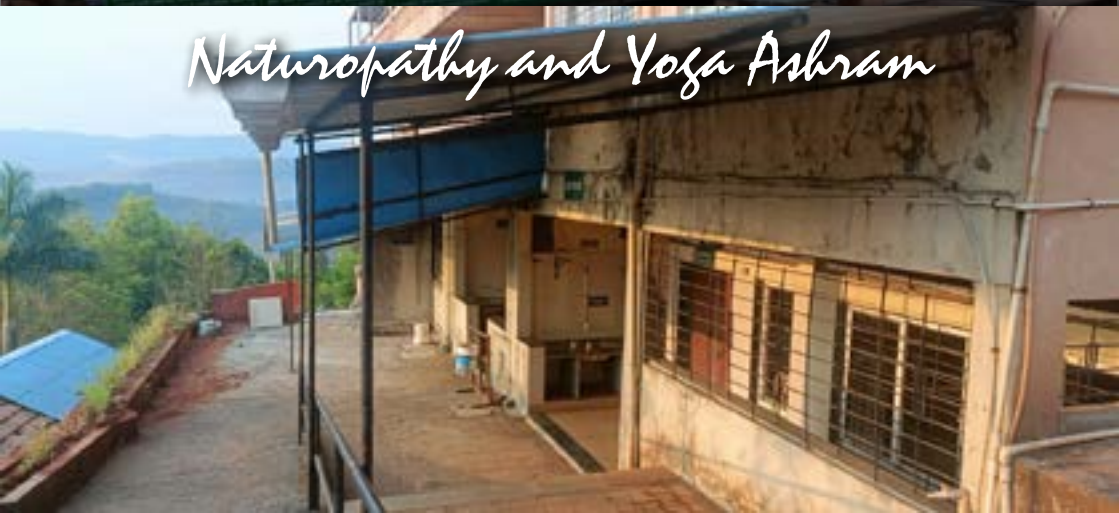

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Poojya Guruji Swami Atmanandaji

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By P. Swamini Samatanandaji

Every Sunday (4.00-5.00 PM)

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